REMARKS

This paper is submitted in response to the final Office Action dated April 16, 2008 (the "Office Action").

Claims 1-3, 5, 7-10, 12-18, 24-27, 31, 33-35, 39, 41-43, 45-48, 51, and 55-67 are pending in the application, including new claims 55-67. Claims 4, 11, 29, 36, 37, 49, 50, and 52-54 have been canceled in this paper.

Claims 1-3, 5, 7-10, 12-18, 24-27, 31, 33-35, 39, 41-43, 45-48, and 51 stand rejected.

Claim 54 was under objection.

The amendments add no new matter. Support for the amendments can be found throughout the specification, for example in ¶¶ 28, 61, 63, 65-72, and 157.

Formal Matters

Applicant is grateful for the opportunity provided to the undersigned representative to discuss the pending claims with the Examiner during a telephonic interview on June 11, 2008. Although no agreement was reached during that discussion, Applicant is grateful for the Examiner's comments and the invitation to submit the above claim amendments and new claims.

Claim Objections

Claim 54 was under objection under 37 C.F.R. 1.75(c) as being of improper dependent form. Applicant has canceled claim 54, and submits that the claim objection is therefore now moot.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claim 54 stood rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as purportedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention. Applicant has canceled claim 54, and submits that the rejection under § 112, second paragraph, is therefore now moot.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1-3, 5, 7-10, 12-18, 24-27, 31, 33-35, 39, 42-43, 46-47, and 51 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as purportedly being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,035,305 issued to Strevey et al. ("Strevey") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,980,096 issued to Thalhammer-Reyero et al. ("Thalhammer-Reyero"). Claims 41, 45, and 48 stand rejected under § 103(a) as purportedly being unpatentable over Strevey in view of Thalhammer-Reyero and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,884,217 issued to Skeirik et al. ("Skeirik"). Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are allowable under § 103(a) because the cited passages of the references, whether taken individually or in combination, fail to disclose each limitation of Applicant's pending claims.

As amended, independent claim 1 includes the following limitations:

> receiving, <u>during a runtime session</u>, a request to associate a first
> component product from a set of component products with
> the customizable product instance; and

> determining, <u>during the runtime session</u>, whether to associate the
> first component product with the customizable product
> instance based on the customizable class rule.

At least these limitations of claim 1 are absent from the cited passages of the references.

The Office Action cites various sections of Strevey purportedly related to a user entering information on a computer. It is important to recognize the context of this user interaction in Strevey. That is, the described user interaction is designer's interaction with a software program for creating a reference tool, <u>not</u> a customer's selection of options for interactively configuring the customer's system.

In Fig. 1, Strevey introduces purported creation (block 26) and display (block 28) of a "Knowledge Map," and purported use of the Knowledge Map with object-based information (blocks 34, 36, and 38). The Knowledge Map purportedly "graphically displays the information necessary to configure a product." (Strevey at 2:40-42.)

The creation of the Knowledge Map, from block 26 of FIG. 1, is detailed in FIG. 2 of Strevey. FIG. 2 includes a block (40) to "receive product configuration information." This block 30, in turn, is further detailed in FIG. 3 of Strevey. FIG. 3 includes various blocks (50, 52, 54, 56, 58, and 60) that are used to receive the product configuration information. The operation of these blocks involves "a user entering the information using a keyboard and mouse, or other appropriate input mechanisms." Strevey at 6:19-22.

Subsequent passages of Strevey provide for the "user" to employ a graphical design software such as Visio 4.0 (Strevey at 6:62-65) to draw shapes and icons. The cited portions of Strevey discuss the drawing process:

> The Visio 4.0 system utilizes an object-oriented paradigm.
> In such a paradigm, a particular shape drawn on the computer
> screen is a graphical object, having certain attributes that define the
> object. The master shapes represent classes of objects. When an
> operator selects a master shape, or object class, and a
> corresponding location on the computer screen, an object
> corresponding to an instance of the selected class is created and
> displayed graphically on the computer screen. Generic attributes

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> of the object, such as size and color, are initialized to default values and may be subsequently modified by an operator.
>
> In an object-oriented paradigm, a class is defined by its attributes. Objects, or instances, within the class include all class attributes. A subclass of a class may be defined, wherein the subclass "inherits" the attributes of the parent class. The inherited attribute values may be modified, or new attributes added to the subclass. An object of the subclass correspondingly obtains the attributes of the subclass. Through "multiple inheritance," an object may be created that is a member of more than one class. Such an object obtains the attributes of all of its parent classes. A hierarchy including classes, subclasses, and objects is useful to organize and understand the numerous objects in a complex system.

Strevey at 7:9-33 (emphasis added).

> FIG. 6 is a pictorial representation of a portion of the user interface 410 (FIG. 4) of the graphical computer program 404. The user interface 410 includes the pallet 414 containing the iconic representations of graphical objects that are selectable by an operator. The iconic representations include: an option icon 604; a dependent module icon 608; an independent module icon 610; a group box icon 612; an OR box icon 614; an AND box icon 616; a conjunctive relationship icon 618; a disjunctive relationship icon 620; two contingent relationship icons 622; plus other icons not relevant to this invention. The iconic representations within the pallet 414 are best discussed with reference to the class hierarchy illustrated in FIG. 5.

Strevey at 10:36-48 (emphasis added). The cited sections of Strevey relate to a user entering information, using graphical design software such as Visio 4.0, purportedly to create Strevey's Knowledge Map. An example of the resulting Knowledge Map is illustrated in FIG. 7A of Strevey.

As disclosed by Strevey , the Knowledge Map is not a computer tool used for interactive communication during runtime session with a customer. Rather, it is a graphical display. *See, e.g,* Strevey at 1:8-10, 2:13, and 2:40-42. The Knowledge Map can purportedly be used by a customer as a reference for selecting available options while configuring a complex product. *See*

id. at FIG. 7A. "The Knowledge Map provides a customer with <u>a well organized description of</u>
<u>the available options</u> when determining a desired configuration of a complex product, such as a
commercial aircraft." *Id. at* 3:35-39 (emphasis added). Thus, the selections of icons from
pallet 414 in Strevey and related teachings that are cited in the Office Action (Strevey 7:21-32,
10:38-42, and 7:13-19, for example), <u>are not a customer's interactive selection</u> of options from
the Knowledge Map. Rather, they are the selections made by a user during the layout of the
Knowledge Map for subsequent use by a customer.

The Knowledge Map illustrates in graphic form the allowed and disallowed component
combinations for a system such as an aircraft. An example of Strevey's Knowledge Map is
shown in FIG. 7A. FIG. 7A purportedly shows various options for a customer, such as a "five
minute takeoff" option 704 and a "ten minute takeoff" option 706. This information may be
useful for requesting a product with a customer's desired options.

This understanding of the creation of the Knowledge Map is further made clear with
reference to FIG. 1 of Strevey. The cited user entries in Strevey 7:21-32, 10:38-42, 7:13-19,
Abstract, 2:52-59, 2:65—3:3, 3:8-10, 5:3-6, 5:61-67, and 9:1-10 relate to the entry of
information in the steps of FIG. 3. Strevey at 6:19-22. These steps are elements of step 40 of
FIG. 2, which in turn are elements of FIG. 1's step 26: "Create Knowledge Map." The cited
user interactions with a computer are therefore <u>a designer's interaction with a software program</u>
for creating this reference tool, the Knowledge Map, for customers. These interactions are <u>not a</u>
<u>customer's interactive runtime selection</u> of options for configuring the customer's system.

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Accordingly, the cited passages do not relate to, and would not be understood by a person having ordinary skill in the art as relating to, a <u>runtime session</u> in which a request is received to associate a component product, and <u>in which a determination is made whether to associate the component product</u>.

In contrast, Applicant's claim 1 includes "receiving, during a runtime session, a request to associate a first component product from a set of component products with the customizable product instance," and "determining, during the runtime session, whether to associate the first component product with the customizable product instance based on the customizable class rule." At least these limitations are absent from the cited passages of Strevey.

In addition, these limitations are also absent from the cited passages of Thalhammer-Reyero and Skeirik. The Final Office Action makes no claim that these additional references provide disclosure related to the language missing from Strevey, and Applicant doe not find such disclosure in the cited passages of these additional references.

At least for this reason, Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent claim 1, and all claims dependent therefrom, are allowable under and § 103(a). At least for similar reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that amended independent claims 8, 15, 24, and 33, and all claims dependent therefrom, are also allowable under § 103(a). Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections be withdrawn.

New Claims

New claims 67-78 have been added. Claim 67 depends on independent claim 1 and is therefore allowable at least for the reasons discussed above. At least for similar reasons, claims 68-78 are also allowable.

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CONCLUSION

Applicant submits that all claims are now in condition for allowance, and a notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned.

If any extensions of time under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136 are required in order for this submission to be considered timely, Applicant hereby petitions for such extensions. Applicant also hereby authorizes that any fees due for such extensions or any other fee associated with this submission, as specified in 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or § 1.17, be charged to deposit account 502306.

Respectfully submitted,

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